श्री सभापति : ठीक है, श्री मतिलाल, आप बोलिए।...(**व्यवधान**)... कछंल जी, आप उनको सुनिए।

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Sir, the hon. Minister, in his reply, has stated that 22,233 villages have been electrified. My question is this. Sir, you know that if only ten per cent houses are electrified, the village is called 'electrified'. So, from this figure, we do know what is the actual coverage, on an average. Will the hon. Minister tell us what is the coverage in percentage?

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the earlier scheme was that one pole used to go up to the revenue border of the village, and it was treated as electrified. But, today, we have changed the definition. In every village, electricity must go to school, to Gram Panchayat, to dispensary, and all the BPL and Harijan households must be covered under that. They all should get the electricity connection, and, at least, a minimum ten per cent of the houses should be electrified. Then only, it will be treated as electrified.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q. No. 182. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Sir, he has not answered my question. What is the actual percentage. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

Kutir Jyoti Programme

*182. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Finance Minister in his budget speech for 2006-07 had stated that all the unelectrified rural BPL households would be provided electricity connection free of charge as per norms of Kutir Jyoti Programme; and

(b) if so, the percentage of BPL households covered under Kutir Jyoti Programme till 2005-06?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Mo, Sir.

(b) Nearly 21.1% BPL households out of an assumed estimated 3.04 crore BPL households had received electricity connections till March 31,2006.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, all of us are aware that electrification or rural electrification is an important element of the country's progress, and given the situation, I think, this admission by the Government, that only one-fifth of our BPL households have received electricity connections till March 31, 2006, is, actually, a very sorry state of affairs. Now, in this connection, I also want to point out the switch towards electricity is very important in the rural households particularly because it is estimated that roughly fifty crore people suffer from illnesses by using traditional firewood and kerosene for lighting and cooking purposes. Secondly, Sir, there are about five lakh deaths that occur because of lack of electricity and because people use alternative fuel. In this situation, there are two very pertinent issues.

Does the estimation of the number of BPL households tally with the estimation made by the State Governments? There is a vast difference between the two. Now, if that is the case, this one-fifth also would be much lower than what you have anticipated because the State Governments' estimates are always much higher than what the Central Government estimates. Sir, I want to know this from the Minister.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Sir, it is a fact that as far as BPL list is concerned, there have been different opinions and that is why, we mostly depend on the State Governments to verify and find out who really are in the BPL and we go according to the list of the State Governments. There should not be any confusion. If the State Government says that 1, 2 or 3 are BPL, we accept that and accordingly, we make our assessment.

Sir, the hon. Member, Mr. Yechury, has asked as to what have we done about the capacity addition, particularly considering the illness of the poor people. You must be seeing, I have said a number of times in this House, that the country has a deficit of seventy thousand megawatts today if you have a look at the Seventh, the Eighth or the Ninth Plan. The work that has been done in the Tenth Plan is little more, but still I am not satisfied and

the Government is not satisfied. Much has to be done on this and that is why we have switched over to ultra-mega projects, consisting of four thousand megawatts each. We have also brought merger plans, based on bodgetary system of the institution. Then, soon I am likely to go to the Cabinet for changing the hydro-electricity project because huge electricity potential is available in North-East areas, about one lakh and fifty thousand megawatts. So, we are considering that also. In privatisation, we are encouraging private captive generation and for this, we are handling this very quickly. So, this country needs power very quickly and I assure this House that within the next 4-5 years, this country will be surplus in power.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am very happy that the Minister is very optimistic. But, the one point to which I wish to draw his attention, through, you, is the fact that we are supporting this Government on the basis of the Common Minimum Programme. In the Common Minimum Programme, we have promised the country that by 2009, rural electrification will be complete. You have now admitted that only one-fifth of the BPL families actually have received this electricity. Now, you have also said that we have a deficit of seventy thousand megawatts of generation at the moment. As the National Thermal Power Corporation of India stated, we have an unutilized capacity of fifty thousand megawatts. You yourself have stated that we have 1.5 lakh megawatts potential in North-East. We have just two more years to go to fulfil the promise made in the Common Minimum Programme. Where is the urgency? We don't see the urgency on the part of the Government in actually achieving this target. And further, Sir. The hon. Minister has the experience, as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra at one point of time, of soiling his hands with privatisation of the electricity generation *(Interruptions).* All of us know what happened with Enron etc. So, he is laying emphasis on the private sector. Please do not fall into that trap. You take the responsibility, as the Government of India, in providing this and fulfilling the promise that we have made.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Sir, I must tell you that we are taking all the precautions, as far as possible, on privatisation. I am personally monitoring it, considering the past experience of Enron which you have mentioned. (*Interruptions)* You have not taken the name. The former Chief Minister is also here during whose period...*(Interruptions)*... But, Sir, I must tell you, it is a fact, one has to learn by experience. We had burnt

our fingers in that case. So, we are very careful on this issue of privatisation. But it is also a fact that Government alone can't make such a huge expenditure. Yes, we are making such a huge expenditure. I am trying to have consortiums from other countries, even it they are from Russia or China. If anybody comes, he is most welcome and we are considering it. It is not that we are depending only on privatisation. We will certainly utilize all the resources at our disposal.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: But the Home Ministry does not allow China to participate.

SHRI SHUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: At some places it allows them.

SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Sir, the question is about giving free electricity connection to the BPL households only. The former Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Mr. Sushil kumar Shinde, had assured the people of Maharashtra. ..*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are too many former Chief Ministers in the Hosue.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: What was he, Sir?

SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Sir, he had assured the people of Maharashtra that electricity would be given free of charge, at least, to the farmers. Since he is in charge of the Department of Power at the Centre now, may I ask the hon. Minister whether he is considering the old proposition again? Secondly, does he also remember that Enron was started during the Shiv Sena-BJP rule in Maharashtra and immediately after the Congress Government came to power, it was closed?

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Sir, the history of Enron is totally different.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Yechury has given the history of that.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: So, I am not going into the details of it.

SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: At least, you reply to me about free electricity to farmers.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: As far as free electricity is concerned, you can give it under the Electricity Act of 2003. If you make a provision

and give it to the utility authorities, it is at your disposal. As Chief Minister of Maharashtra, I had made provisions in the Budget and gave free electricity for a particular time because my farmers were dying in the State. So, it was my duty to consider it. I had not considered about my Budget. I gave it for a particular period. Has any such courtesy or sympathy shown by anybody?

SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: the promises given during elections were not fulfilled. That is what the Chief Minister has said. Is it not true?

श्री दत्ता मेघे : यह महाराष्ट्र इश्यू है।

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, my original question...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: The hon. Member was not only the Chief Minister of Maharashtra but also the Speaker of Lok Sabha. That is why he should know everything. The whole discussion on Enron had taken place during his tenure in the Lok Sabha. That he should not forget. *(Interruptions)*...

श्री जयन्ती लाल बरोट : माननीय सभापति जी, मैं आपके माध्यम से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि गुजरात में उकई थर्मल पावर स्टेशन है, वह पिछले 4 महीनों से बंद है, इसके कारण आज गुजरात और महाराष्ट्र में बिजली की shortage चल रही है। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि यह पावर स्टेशन कब तक चालू हो जाएगा?

श्री सुशील कुमार शिन्दे : सभापति जी, यह न्यूक्लियर डिपार्टमेंट का क्वेश्चन है, फिर भी मैं इसका रिप्लाई दूंगा, क्योंकि overall situation को देखते निमस की थोड़ी कमी है, fuel मैं इसे monitor कर रहा हूं।

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Sir, I am tempted because both the former Chief Ministers of Maharashtra are present here. I would like to know from the hon. Power Minister what the current situation in Enron is and what the Government's loss is.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Sir, there has been loss to Government. It is a known fact. When the UPA came to power, the first decision that the Government had taken is to purchase this project for Rs. 10,500 crores. All foreign lenders have been paid and nothing has remained. If you want to construct a new electricity unit of this capacity, that is, 21,150 megawatt, it requires more than Rs. 15,000 crores. But considering that, the

Manmohan Singhji Government has taken this decision. In fact, we have said, the Government has said, that there is no loss. At the moment, unit No.2 is running and units Nos. 1 and 3 are likely to be run in the month of November. But it is kept in abeyance for repairs, and LNG is not available at the moment.

WELCOME TO PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM NORWAY

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, we have with us, seated in the Special Box, Members of a Parliamentary Delegation from Norway, currently on a visit to our country, under the distinguished leadership of His Excellency, Mr. Thorbjorn Jagland, President of the Storting (Parliament) of Norway.

On behalf of the Members of the House and on my own behalf, I take pleasure in extending a hearty welcome to the Leader and other Members of the Delegation and wish our distinguished guests an enjoyable and fruitful stay in our country. We hope that during their stay here, they would be able to see and learn more about our Parliamentary system, our country and our people, and that their visit to this country will further strengthen the friendly bonds that exist between India and Norway. Through them, we convey our greetings and best wishes to Parliament and the friendly people of Norway.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS—*Contd.*

Schemes for girl education

*183. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what steps and which schemes, have been announced by Centre/ States to give fillip to girl students and also to encourage female education;

(b) the funds sanctioned and achievements, made thereof, during the last three years in the country;

(c) whether any quota has been reserved for girl students from primary to university level;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and